



## Our Focus

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program, as part of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, encompasses two separate USDA programs: The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). Both programs utilize agents and assistants to provide educational opportunities for limited-resource individuals and families to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and change behaviors for improved health and well-being.

## Our Challenge

### Poverty

According to US Census estimates for 2017, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$48,332**, almost 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$60,336**.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky also has higher percentages of poverty and food insecurity among its population compared to census estimate for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
<b>Total Poverty</b>	17.1%	13.4%
<b>Child Poverty</b>	22.1%	18.4%
<b>Food Insecurity</b>	14.7%	12.3%

In 2017, an estimated **14,330** Marshall County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **3,285** were children under 18.<sup>1</sup>

### Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.<sup>2</sup> These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke.



In 2017, the percentage of obese adults in Kentucky was **34.3%**, ranking it in the top 10 states for highest obesity rates in the country. The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians was **34.4%**, ranking it as the most physically inactive state in the nation. Kentucky was also ranked in the top 10 for high percentages of adults with diabetes (**12.9%**) and adults with hypertension (**39.4%**).<sup>3</sup> A large body of evidence shows that healthy eating habits and regular physical activity can help people achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic disease throughout life.<sup>2</sup>

In 2015, **36.2%** of Marshall County's adult population were considered obese, and **25.4%** were considered physically inactive.<sup>4</sup>

## Our Solution

Provide hands-on, nutrition education to limited-resource audiences, focusing on:

- Buying and preparing healthy foods
- Developing new meal planning and cooking skills
- Adopting new healthy lifestyle behaviors
- Managing SNAP resources

In 2019, 2,187 contacts were made with Marshall County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

## Our Results

### IN KENTUCKY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 83% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 92% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 90% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 87% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Gardening for Physical Activity

According to the CDC, moderate intensity activity for 2.5 hours each week can reduce the risk for obesity, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease, stroke, depression, colon cancer, and premature death. The CDC considers gardening a moderate intensity activity that also offers other benefits, such as stress relief. Backyard gardening provides access to healthy foods, control over the types of fertilizers and pesticides used, and the ability to harvest food at its peak quality. Gardening Options for Everyone is an Extension program that teaches families how to utilize whatever space is available by considering raised beds and container gardens when a traditional garden plot is not feasible. The Marshall County Family and Consumer Sciences agent reached over 300 Extension Homemakers and community members with the program over the past two years. Follow-up surveys indicate 50% have installed at least one raised bed, and 75% have used containers to grow herbs and vegetables, in addition to those who enjoy traditional gardening. Participants commented: "It is a great feeling when you can supplement the family grocery bill with produce from your own backyard." In addition, more than 50% of participants were able to share vegetables with family and friends.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

#### SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. World Health Organization Media Centre
3. The State of Obesity Report 2019
4. 2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.



[PlanEatMove.com](http://PlanEatMove.com)



[Facebook.com/KYNEP](https://Facebook.com/KYNEP)



[YouTube.com/UKKYNEP](https://YouTube.com/UKKYNEP)